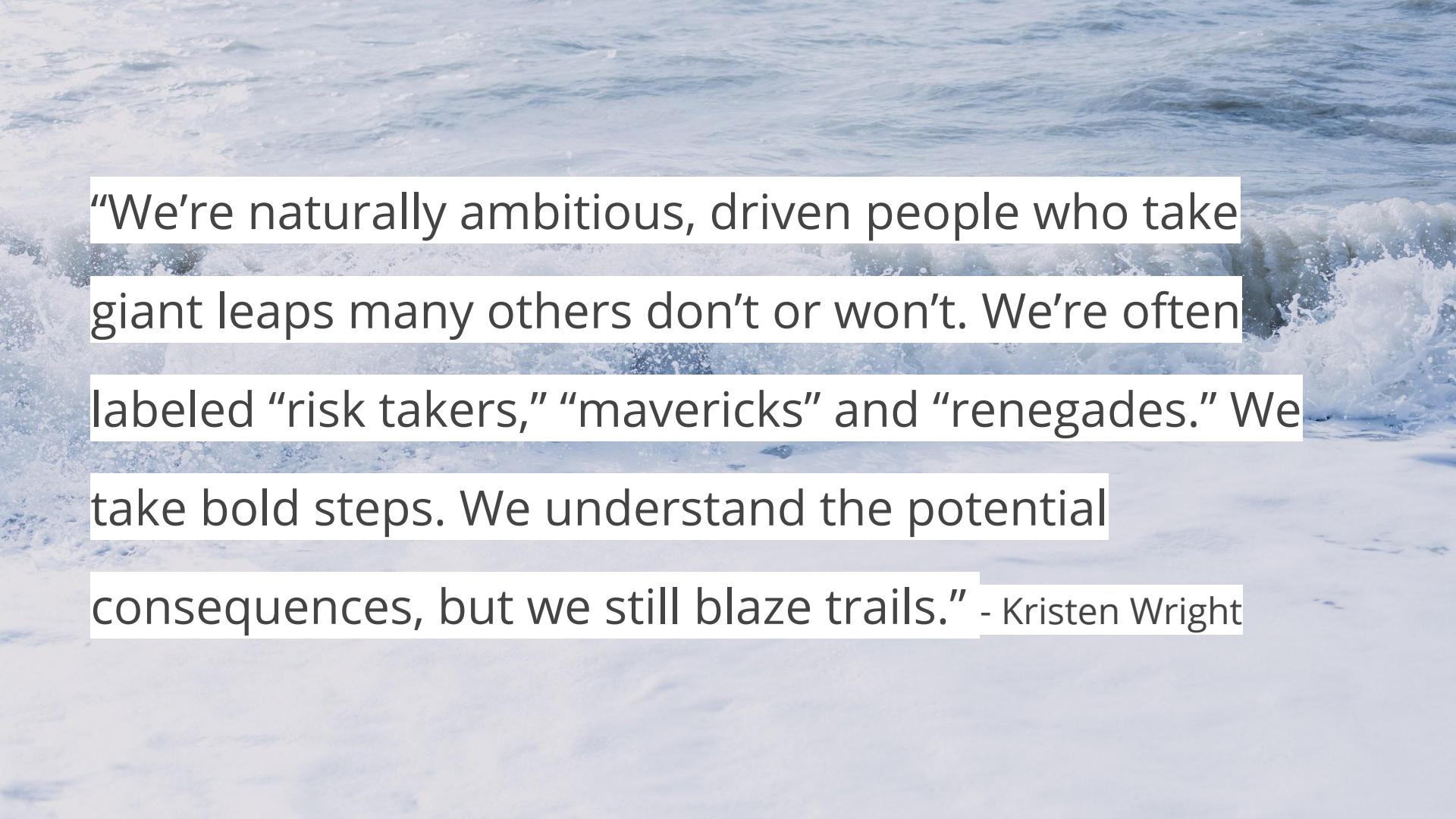


FREELANCE



Starting Your Own Web Development Business

and Learning How to Survive in the Digital Wild



"We're naturally ambitious, driven people who take

giant leaps many others don't or won't. We're often

labeled "risk takers," "mavericks" and "renegades." We

take bold steps. We understand the potential

consequences, but we still blaze trails." - Kristen Wright

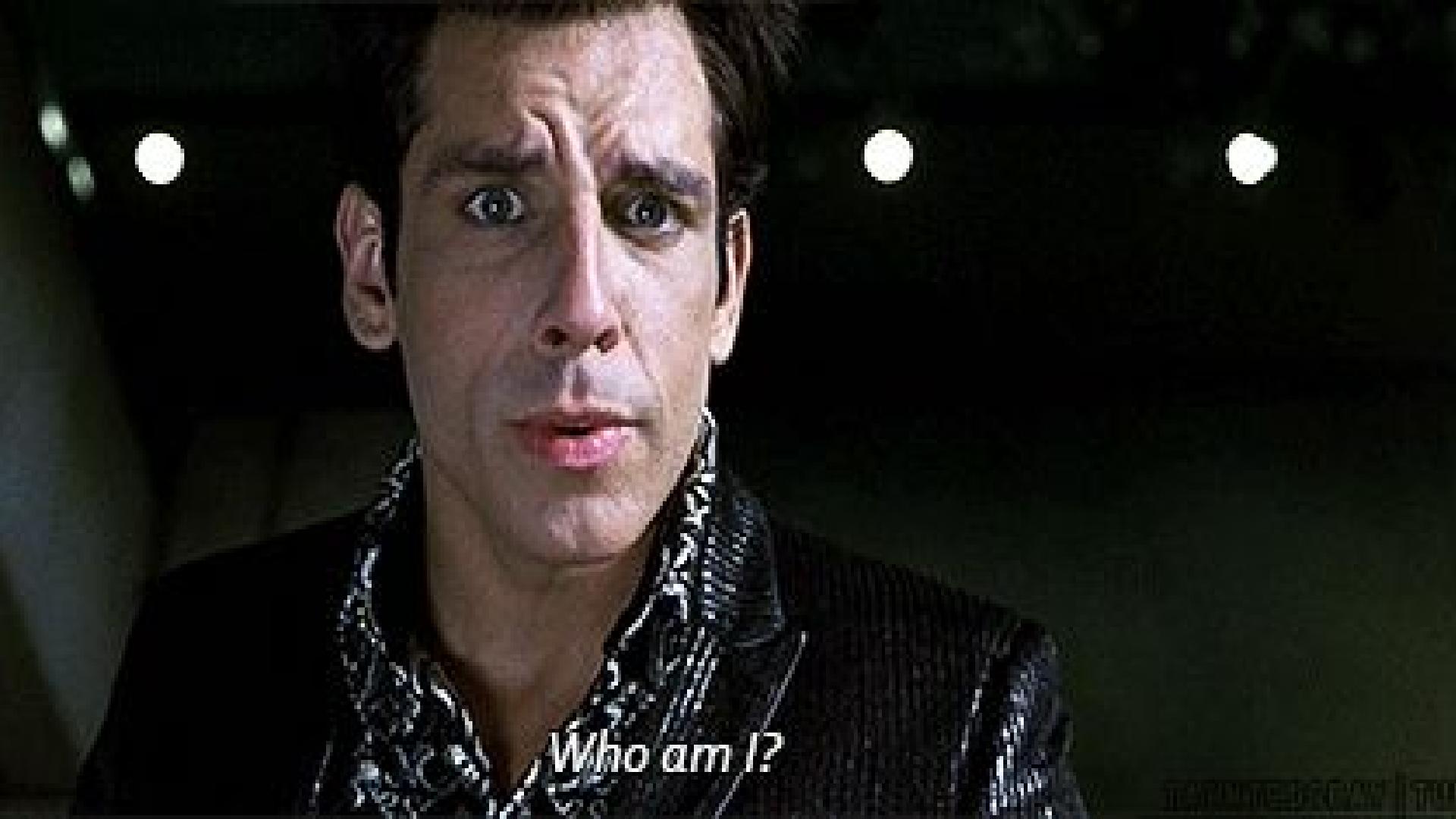
What are we going to talk about?

Who am I?

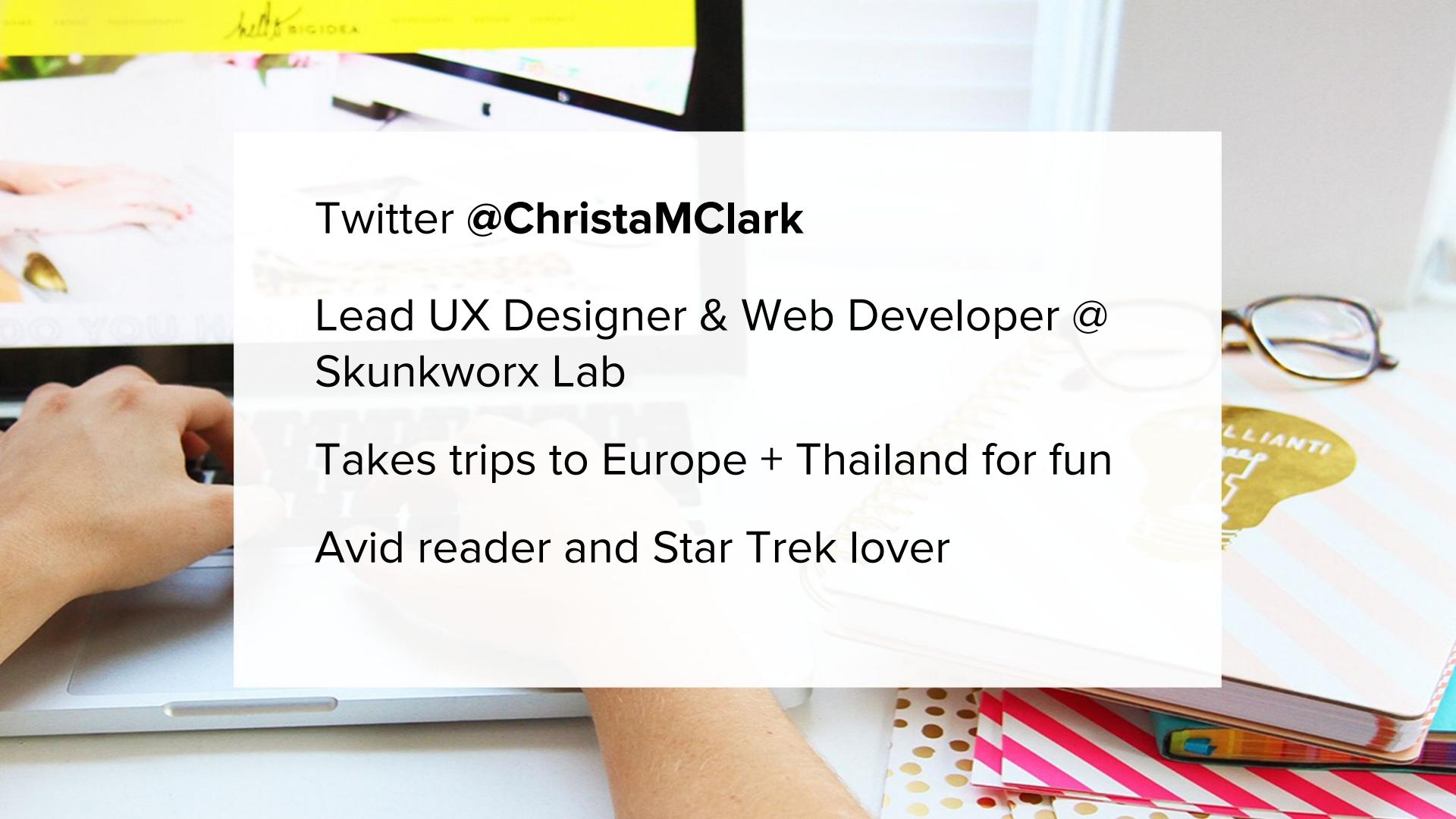
Business basics + getting started

Finding, keeping, and managing clients

Providing the highest quality work



Who am I?



Twitter **@ChristaMClark**

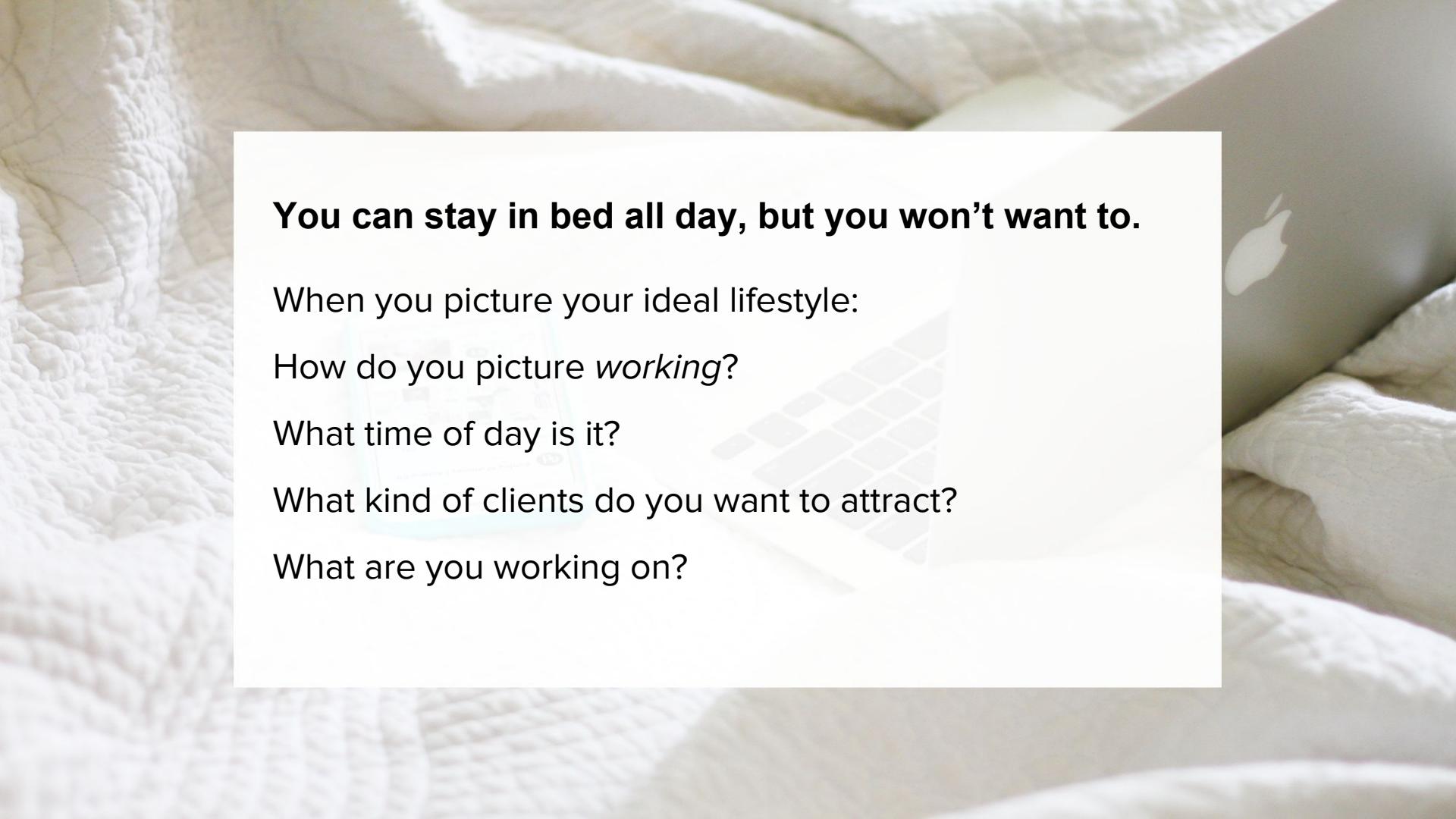
Lead UX Designer & Web Developer @
Skunkworx Lab

Takes trips to Europe + Thailand for fun

Avid reader and Star Trek lover



Business basics & Getting started



You can stay in bed all day, but you won't want to.

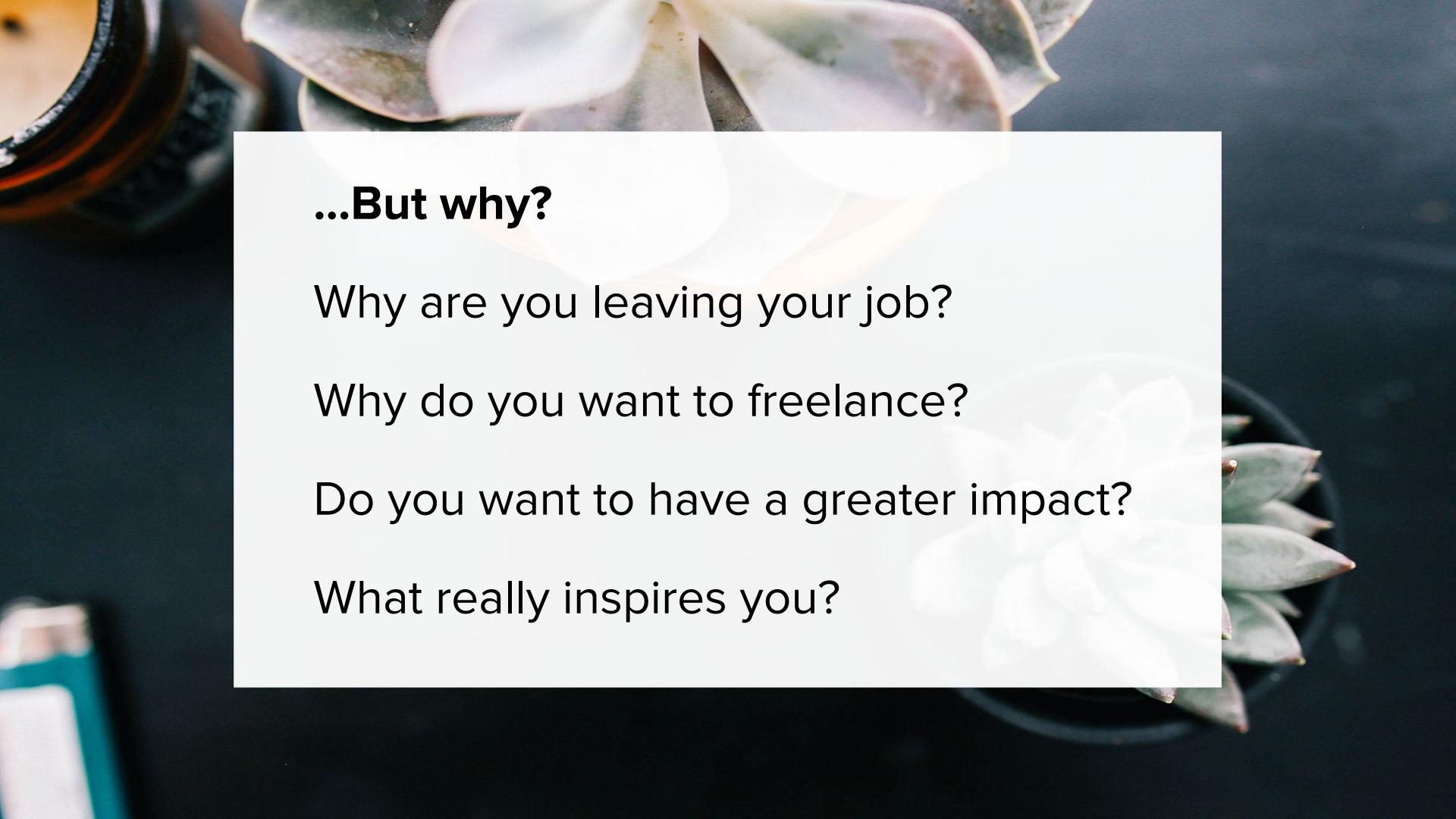
When you picture your ideal lifestyle:

How do you picture *working*?

What time of day is it?

What kind of clients do you want to attract?

What are you working on?

A close-up photograph of various succulent plants, including Echeveria and Aloe, with their thick, fleshy leaves. In the top left corner, a portion of a dark glass jar with a brown liquid inside is visible. The lighting is soft and natural, creating a calm and organic atmosphere.

...But why?

Why are you leaving your job?

Why do you want to freelance?

Do you want to have a greater impact?

What really inspires you?

At the center
of your being
you have the
answer; you
know who you
are and you
know what you
want.

-Lao Tzu

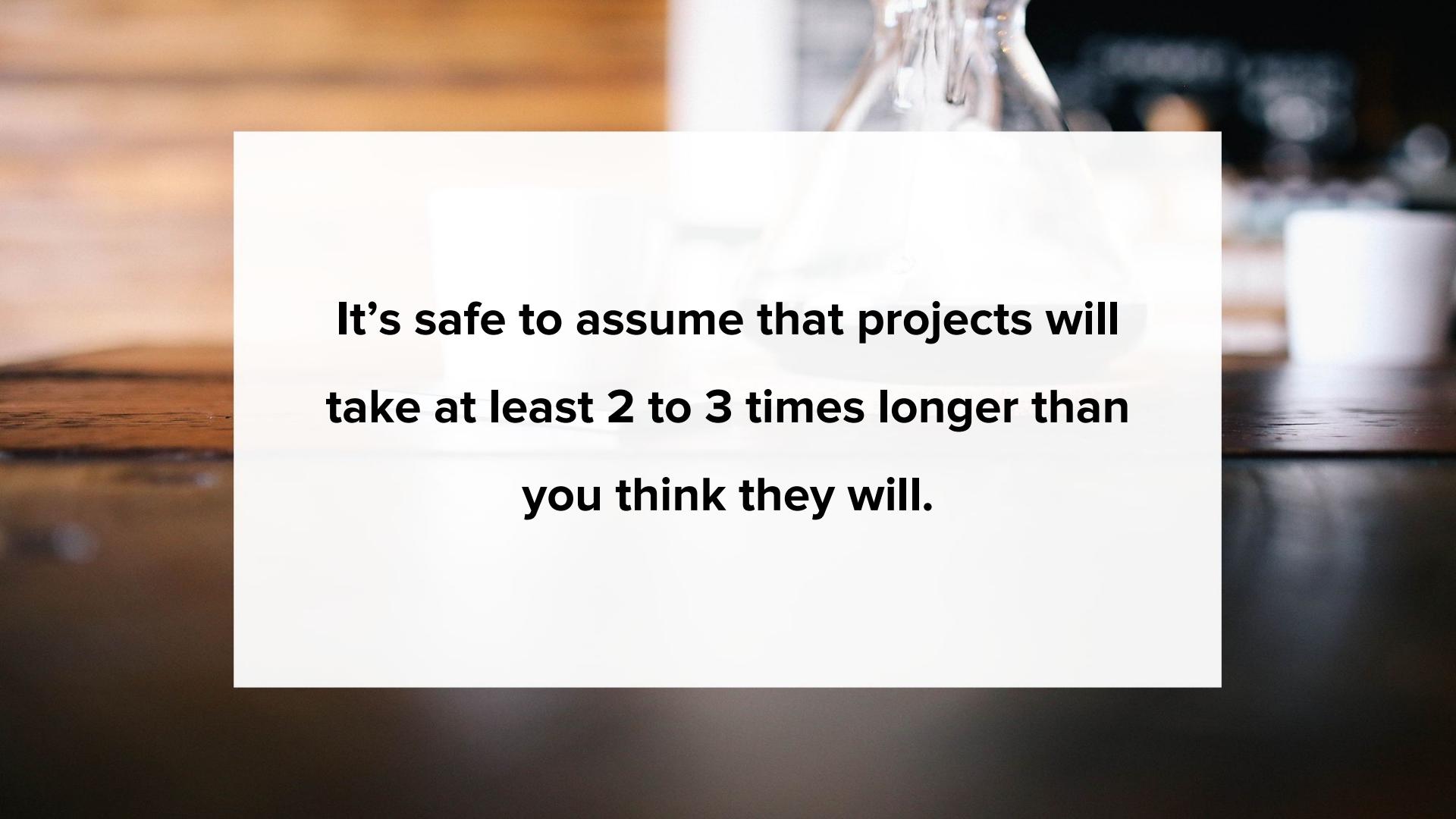
Crafting a schedule

What are the constants in your week?

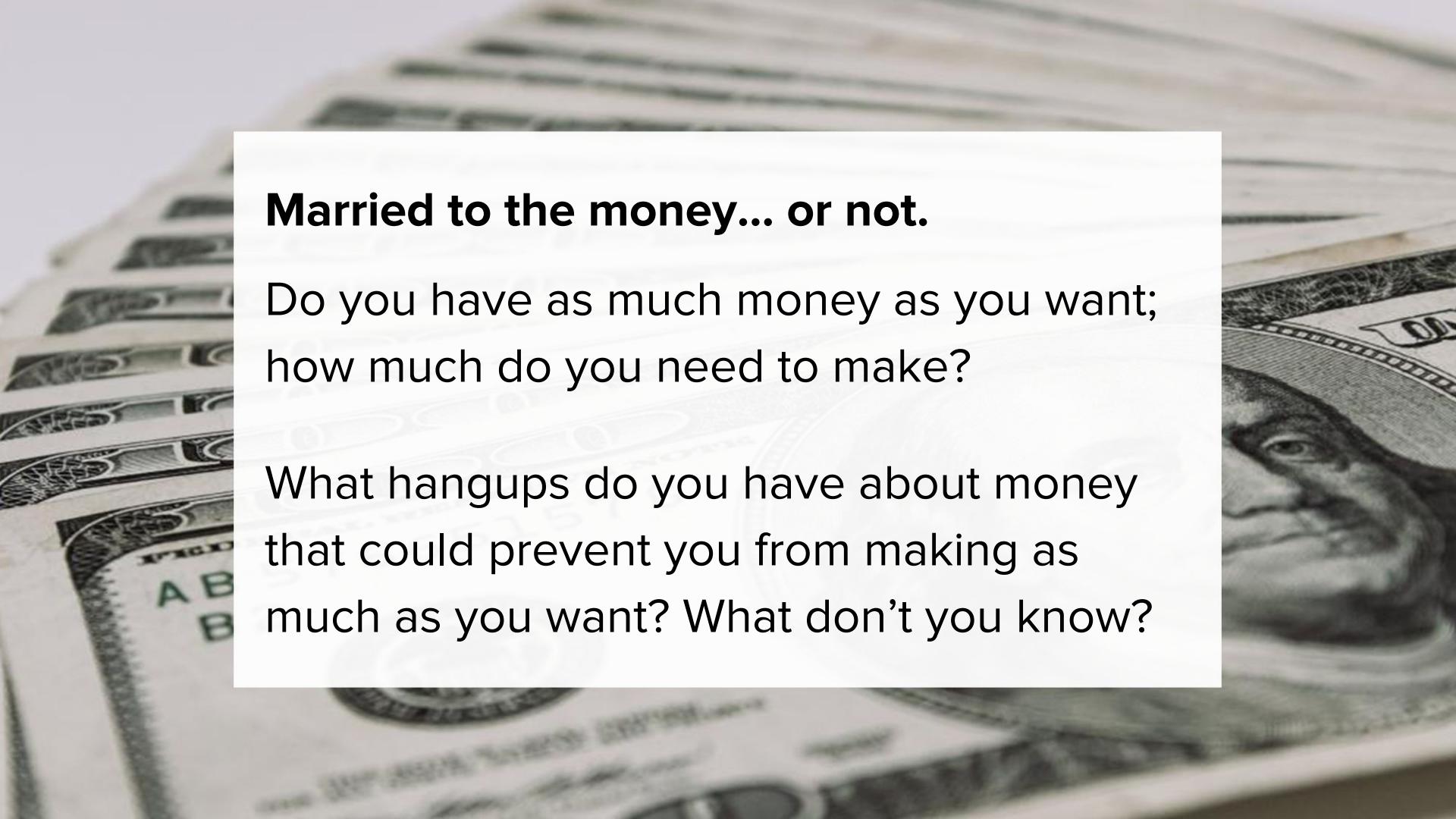
What do you need to make time for?

Schedule everything, even play time.

Always leave ample room in between.



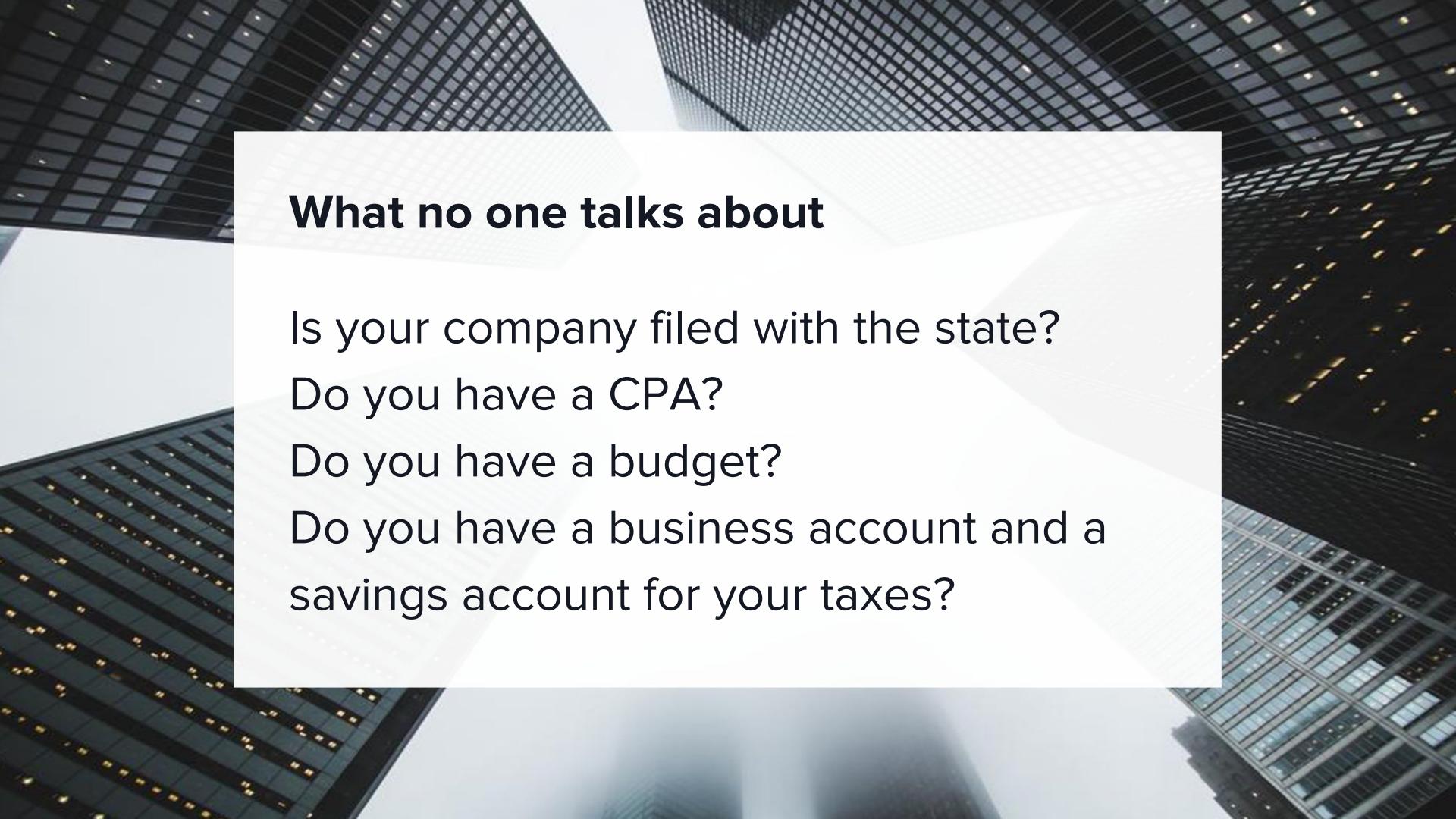
**It's safe to assume that projects will
take at least 2 to 3 times longer than
you think they will.**



Married to the money... or not.

Do you have as much money as you want;
how much do you need to make?

What hangups do you have about money
that could prevent you from making as
much as you want? What don't you know?

The background of the slide is a black and white aerial photograph of a city skyline at night. The buildings are tall and modern, with many windows illuminated by lights. The perspective is from above, looking down the streets between the buildings.

What no one talks about

Is your company filed with the state?

Do you have a CPA?

Do you have a budget?

Do you have a business account and a
savings account for your taxes?



Hiring and Firing

How to Find + Keep Clients





It will take a few tries

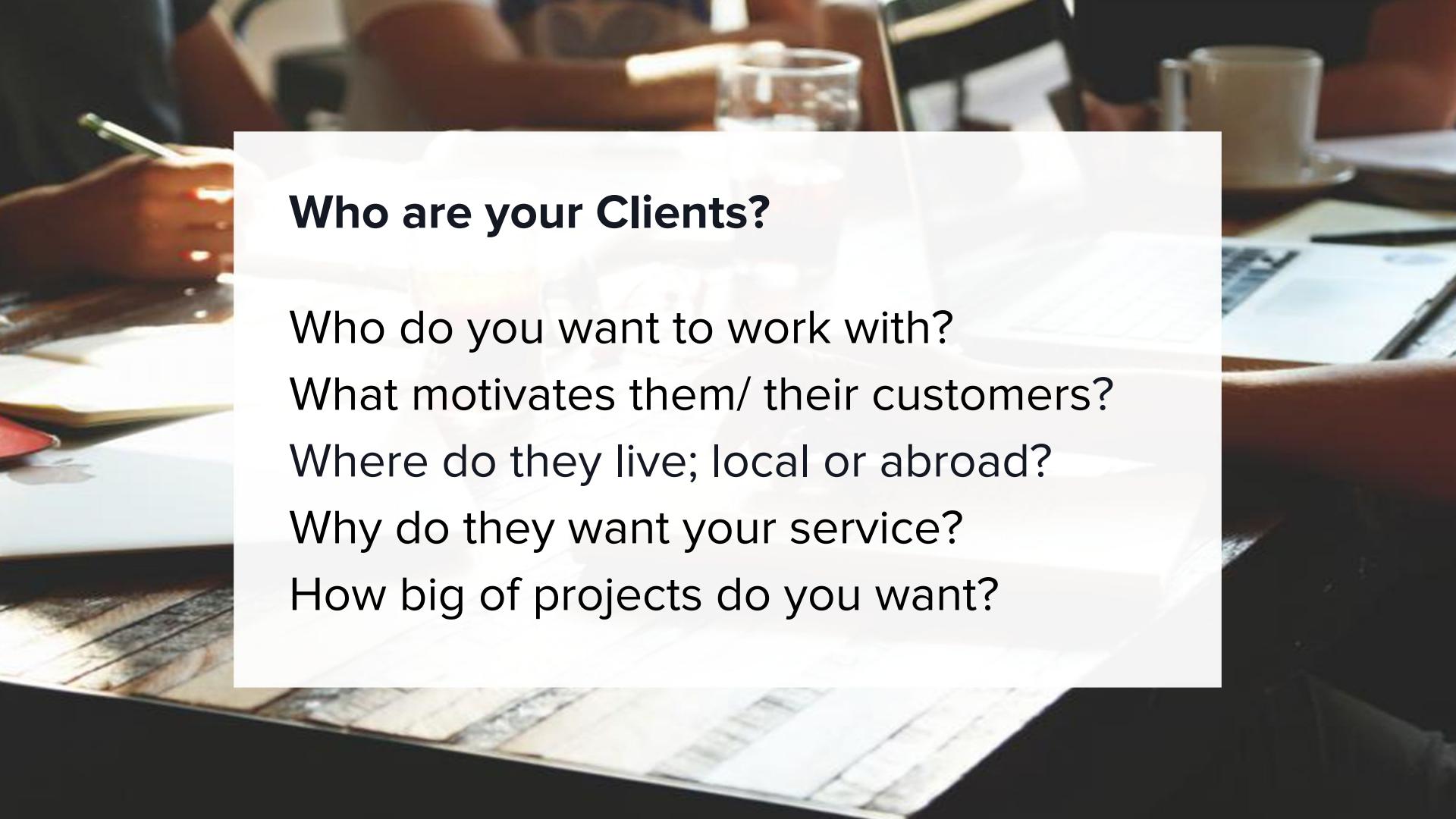
Try working on an array of different projects and see what you enjoy. There may be something you never knew you would love



Find a niche

Are you building websites; if so what kind? E-commerce, landing pages, Wordpress, HTML5 & JS, MEAN stack?

Are you doing web or mobile apps?



Who are your Clients?

Who do you want to work with?

What motivates them/ their customers?

Where do they live; local or abroad?

Why do they want your service?

How big of projects do you want?

Your first client!!

Make it rain business cards

Tell EVERYONE you're freelancing

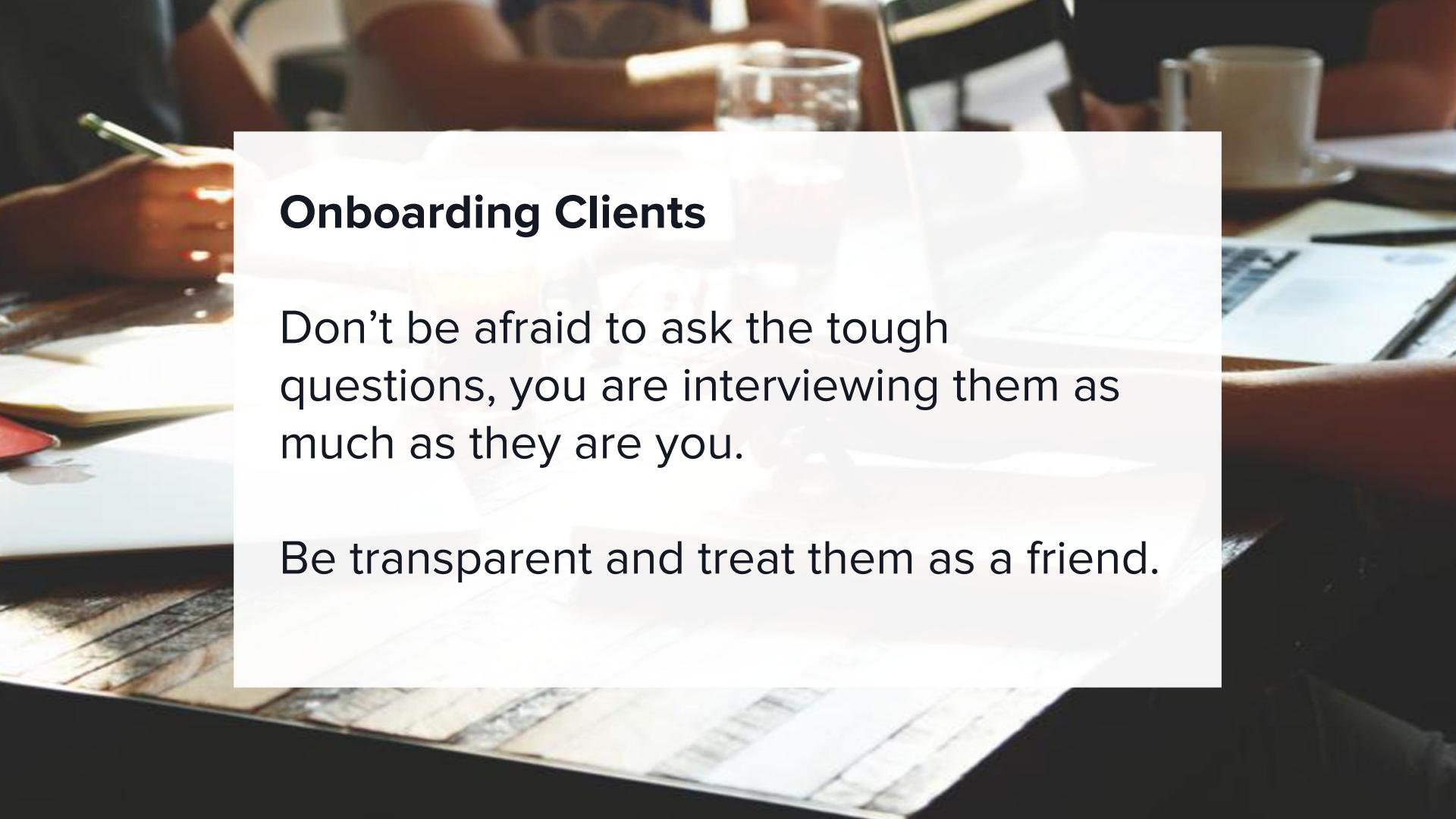
Go to networking events

Post on Facebook or social media

Friends and Family?

Do pro-bono or cheap work for friends,
they will be your cheerleaders.

This is not for everyone, but you will be
able to work with anyone if you can work
with your family members!



Onboarding Clients

Don't be afraid to ask the tough questions, you are interviewing them as much as they are you.

Be transparent and treat them as a friend.

the
hustle
is real

A photograph of a woman with short brown hair and bangs, smiling warmly at the camera. She is wearing a white blouse with small black polka dots. Her right hand is holding a silver pen, poised over an open, yellowed ledger or notebook. The background is slightly blurred, showing what appears to be an office environment with other people and papers.

Managing Clients

Always have a contract.

Retainers can be awesome income.

Know your worth, when it's wise to compromise and when it's not.

Contracts

PLEASE set a limit on revisions!

How much to ask for deposit?

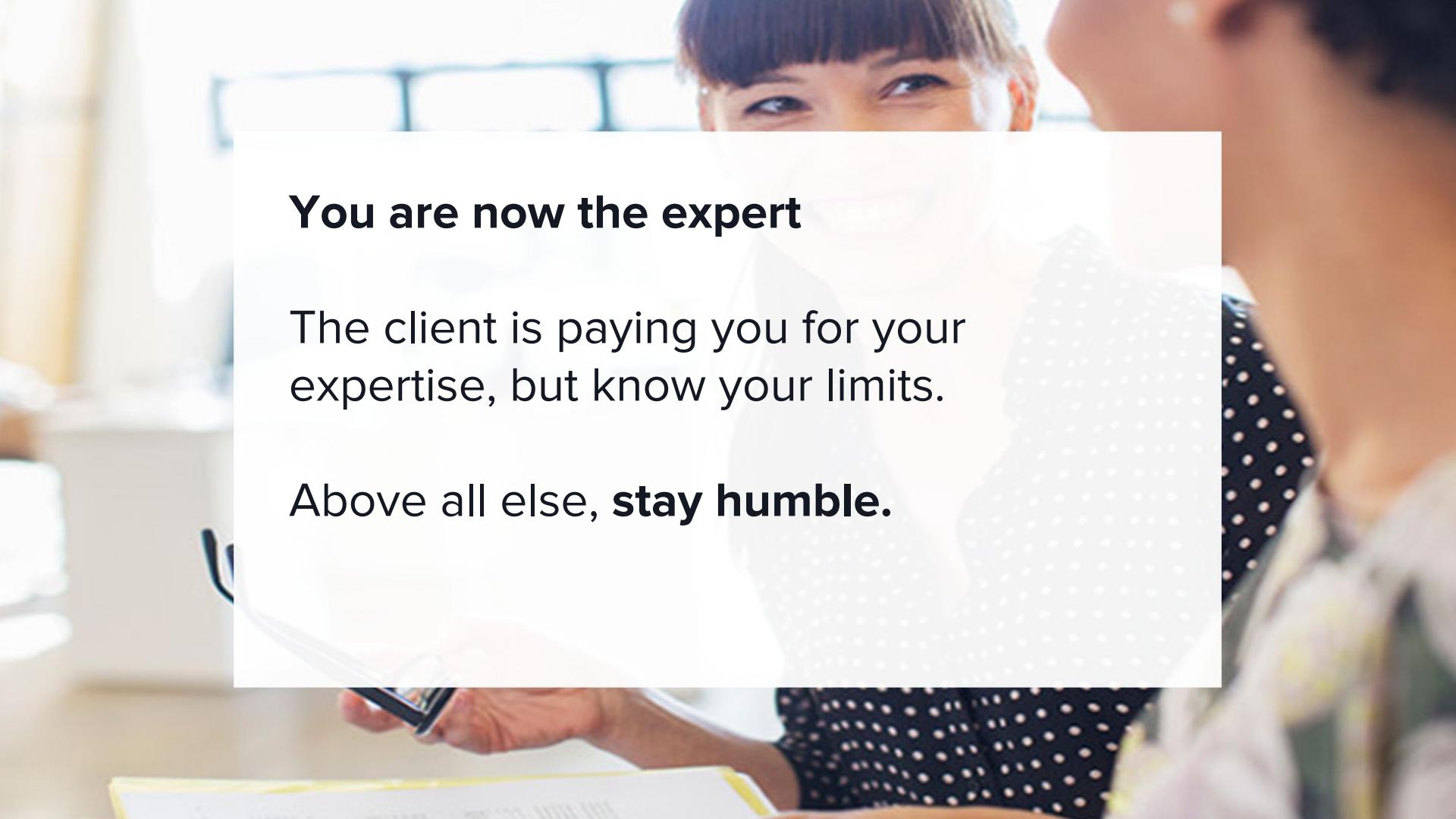
Hourly or set price; learn to quote.

What are you offering (and say no to)?

Deposits

Charge what you are comfortable taking a risk on. There's the possibility they won't pay you.

Most take $\frac{1}{3}$ to $\frac{1}{2}$, but you can take all.

A blurred background photograph of a woman with short brown hair and bangs, smiling warmly at the camera. She is wearing a white blouse with black polka dots. Her right hand is holding a silver smartphone, and her left hand is resting on a yellow book or folder. The scene suggests a professional yet friendly environment.

You are now the expert

The client is paying you for your expertise, but know your limits.

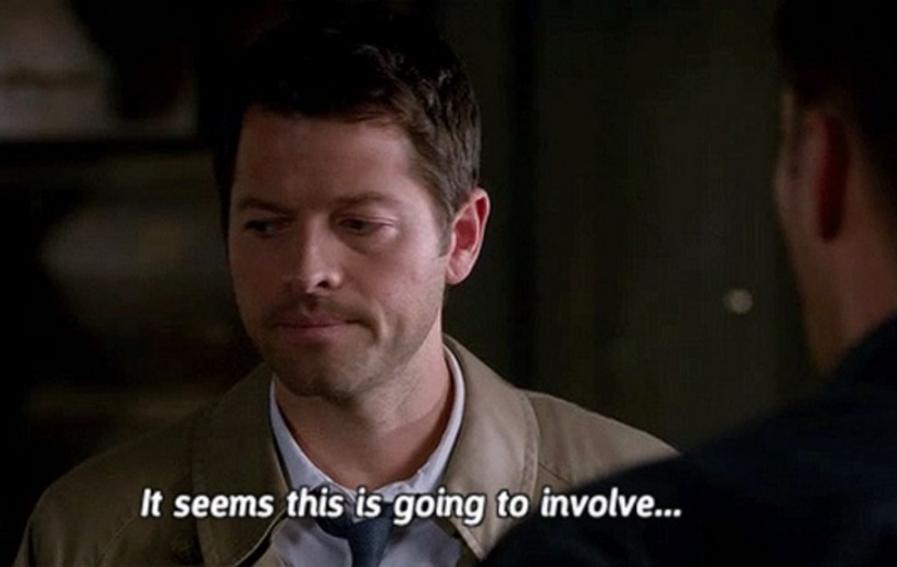
Above all else, **stay humble.**

User Experience > most other things

Understand your clients' users/
customers as much as your clients
themselves.

How will what you are building make
their lives better or easier?

Let's address being awkward and how to not do it.



It seems this is going to involve...



talking to....people.

Checkins

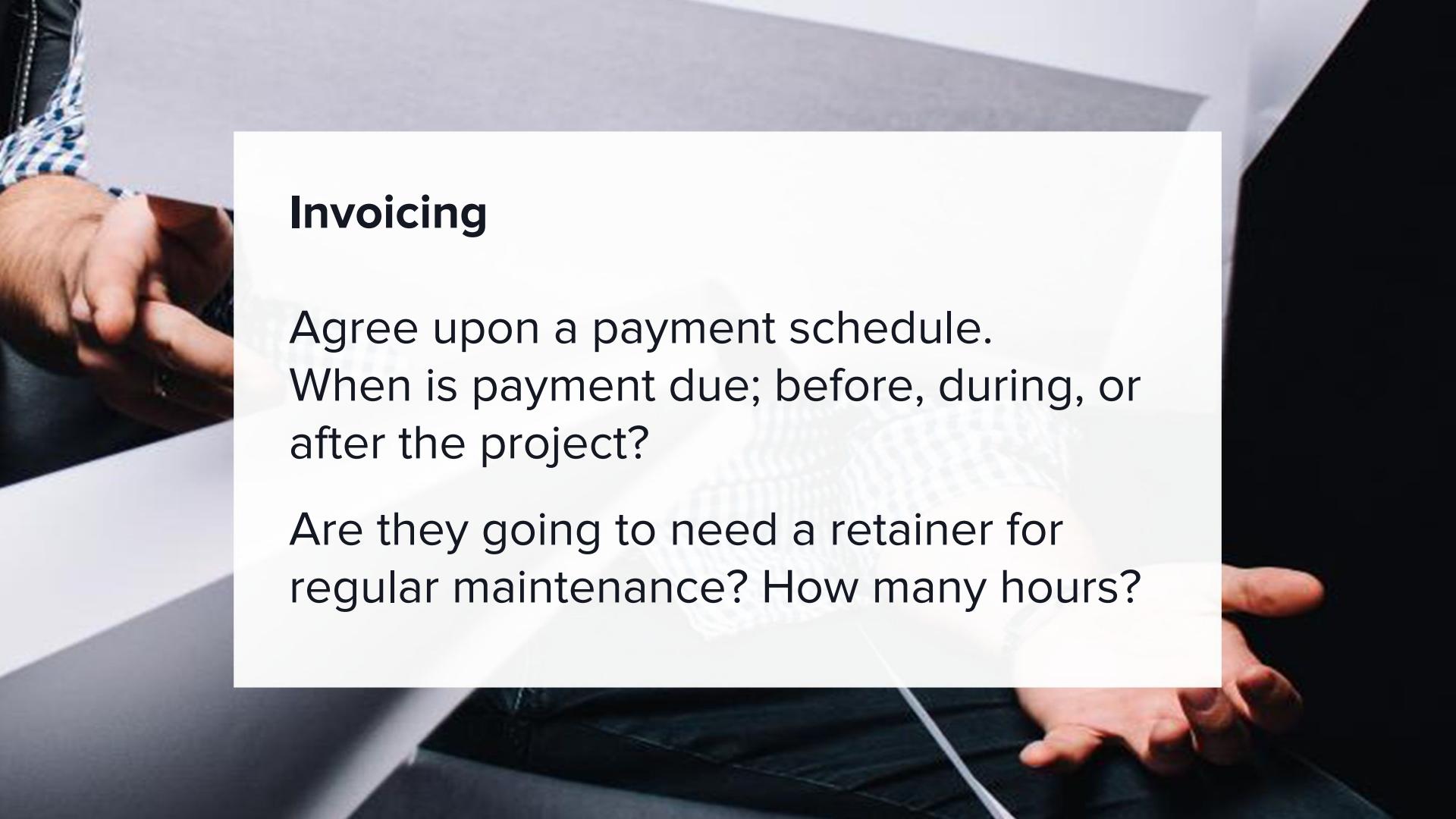
Communicate as often as possible.

Checking in with your client and letting them know where you are at is crucial for the relationship. Ask them about this before you even start working.

Set boundaries + expectations

Let them know what your schedule is and what to expect.

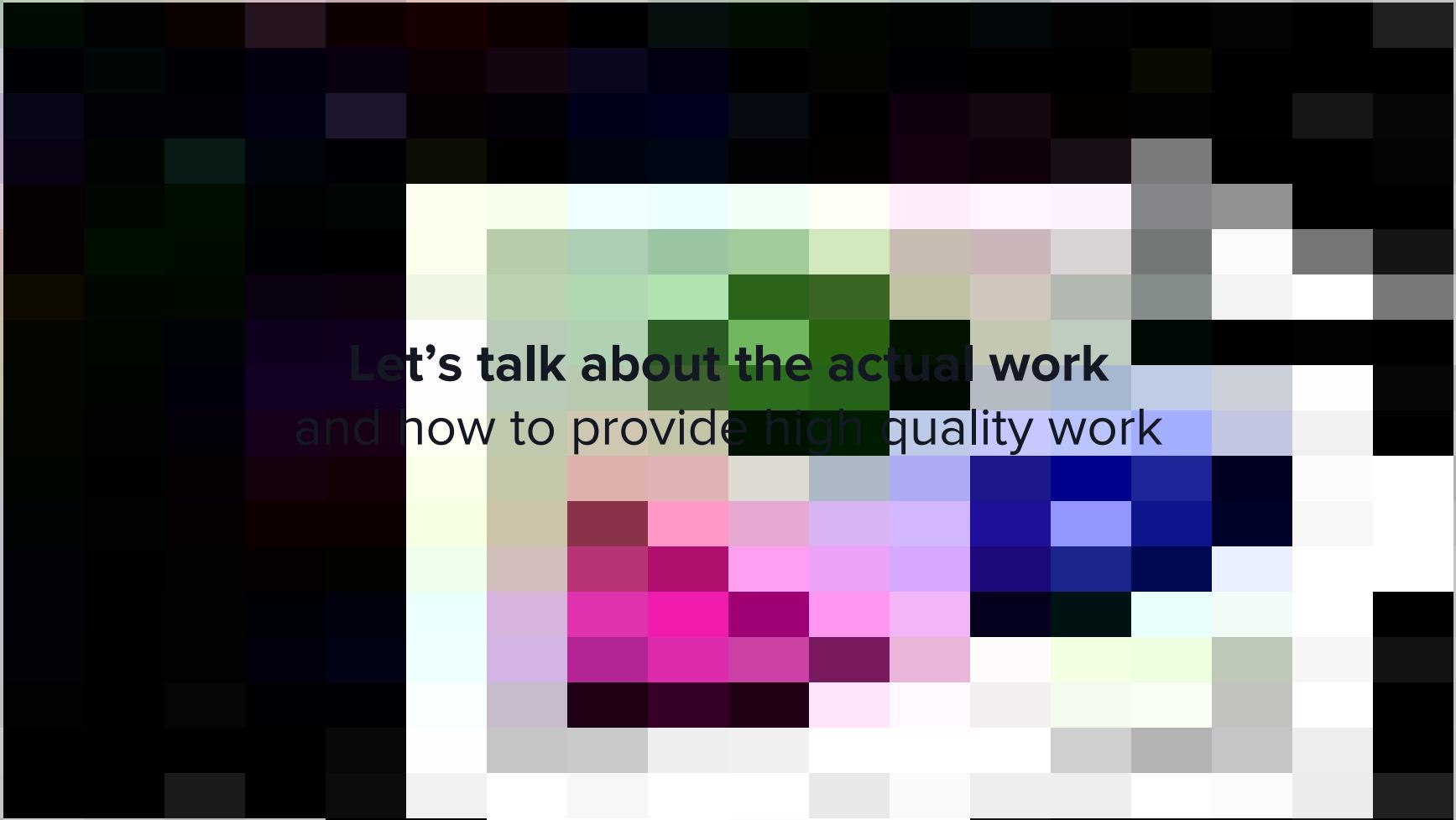
If they still text or email you on Saturday night, don't respond until Monday.

A close-up photograph of a person's hands. One hand is resting on a dark laptop keyboard, while the other hand is visible on the right side of the frame. The person is wearing a patterned shirt. The background is blurred.

Invoicing

Agree upon a payment schedule.
When is payment due; before, during, or
after the project?

Are they going to need a retainer for
regular maintenance? How many hours?



**Let's talk about the actual work
and how to provide high quality work**

I KEEP HITTING THE ESCAPE KEY...



BUT I'M STILL HERE

Timelines

After a few projects you will feel more comfortable with quoting a timeline and I recommend you create one for yourself to apply to general projects.

Here's an example from my website

HOW IT WORKS:

Our websites run between \$3,000 to \$5,000 depending on what you need. After your website is finished, we are happy to set up a retainer of \$100 per hour for regular maintenance and other services.

Each website rebranding project takes 2 – 3 weeks. The delivery time can be shorter or longer depending on the need of the individual project, number and complexity of revisions, client response timeliness, and our current booking schedule.

Offerings:

- 1 badass, brand new WordPress website.
- Standard SEO and we will connect your site to Google Analytics.
- Brand package with several new logo options you can choose from, a color scheme, a font we picked just for you.
- Business cards, social media packages, email newsletters, and other branding materials are available for an extra cost.

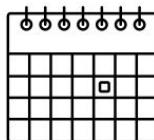
Process

It's helped to have a defined process of how working with you will go and what people can expect.



1. VISION

Like any relationship, it all starts with a first date to make sure we are a good match. After your initial inquiry review, we will set up a phone call. We would love to meet you in person if you are in the Austin area! In this initial meeting, I will ask you some questions regarding your business, vision, and goals for your brand development and give you the chance to ask me any question that comes to mind. This step will give us both a chance to get to know one another and make sure we are going to make an awesome team.



2. BOOKING

If we hit it off and find that we are the perfect match, we will send you a formal proposal. In this we will include a quote on the price and will require 50% of the agreed upon price as a deposit before we begin work. If everything in the proposal is approved by you, please sign, scan, and send the proposal back to us and keep a copy for yourself.



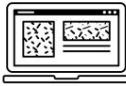
3. YES, HOMEWORK

Since there is typically a wait time between this step and the next, we give you a little homework to prepare for our upcoming project. We will send you a link to our branding questionnaire so can go through and answer some important questions to insure we are on the same page prior to your project start date. This questionnaire will provide valuable information for us as we move throughout your brand design process. .



4. INSPIRE

Whoop whoop! So your project start date is here and now it's time to get this party started. The first step of the branding process is the creation of an inspiration board. We will study your questionnaire and create a color palette along with style inspiration that will set the overall tone of your new brand. Within 3 business days of your start date, you will receive your first deliverable and have a chance to review and request up to 2 rounds of revisions until you are in love with the direction.



5. WEB DESIGN

All site photography and content is due prior to website mockup completion and before we go to the development stages (all files shared by dropbox folder). During this step, the final mockup of the home page and all interior pages are completed and approved by you before moving onto the development phase. Any delays in content may delay your project and bump it back in the pipeline. If any changes are requested by you after mockup approval, you will be billed separately.



6. CREATE

Now that we have established and finalized your design, we will then get to work on creating the cornerstone of your new brand. The design process can take approximately 5-10 business days to complete. We recommend you host your website on WP Engine, <https://wpengine.com/> they cost \$30 a month and are the fastest and most secure hosting service. We will need for you to create an account before we begin work on the site, and we can typically offer you a good discount on their services.



7. LAUNCH

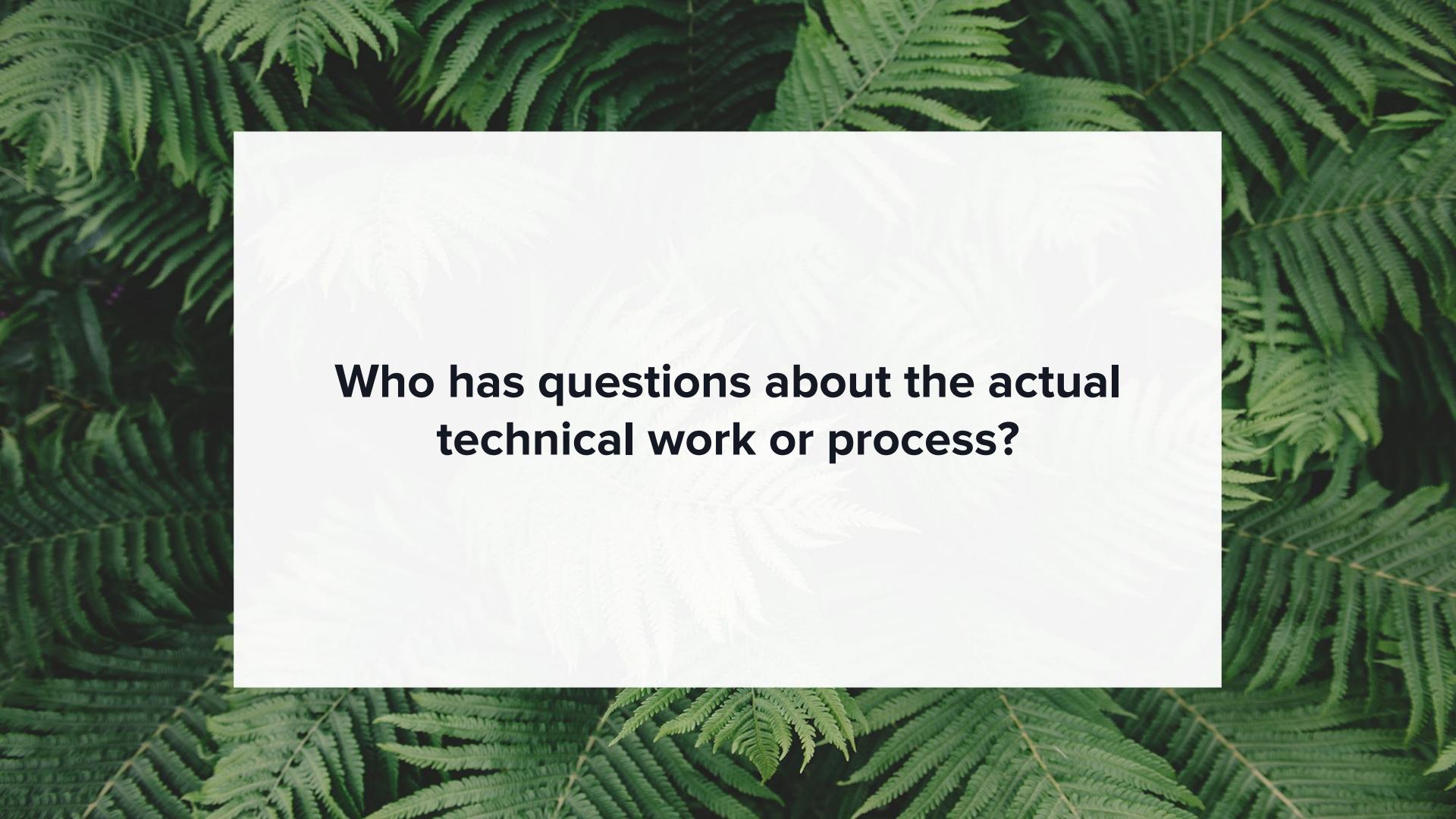
Once your site is complete, your new custom developed theme will be uploaded onto your server. We will also hold our tutorial at this time to show you how to make updates to your site from the backend (you can pay us to make updates for you). Once our final checklist is complete and all systems are go, we will launch your new site to the world!

We will also provide you with your swanky, new brand guide. This includes your lovely new logo, color palette, and inspiration photos then add in your sub mark, logo variations, social icons, patterns, fonts and any elements into a full branding guide format. You will have a chance to review and request up to 2 rounds of revisions on the final board. Once your approval is received and your final payment is made, we will package up your files and send them to you via a convenient Google Drive link for download. And then it's time for a champagne toast!



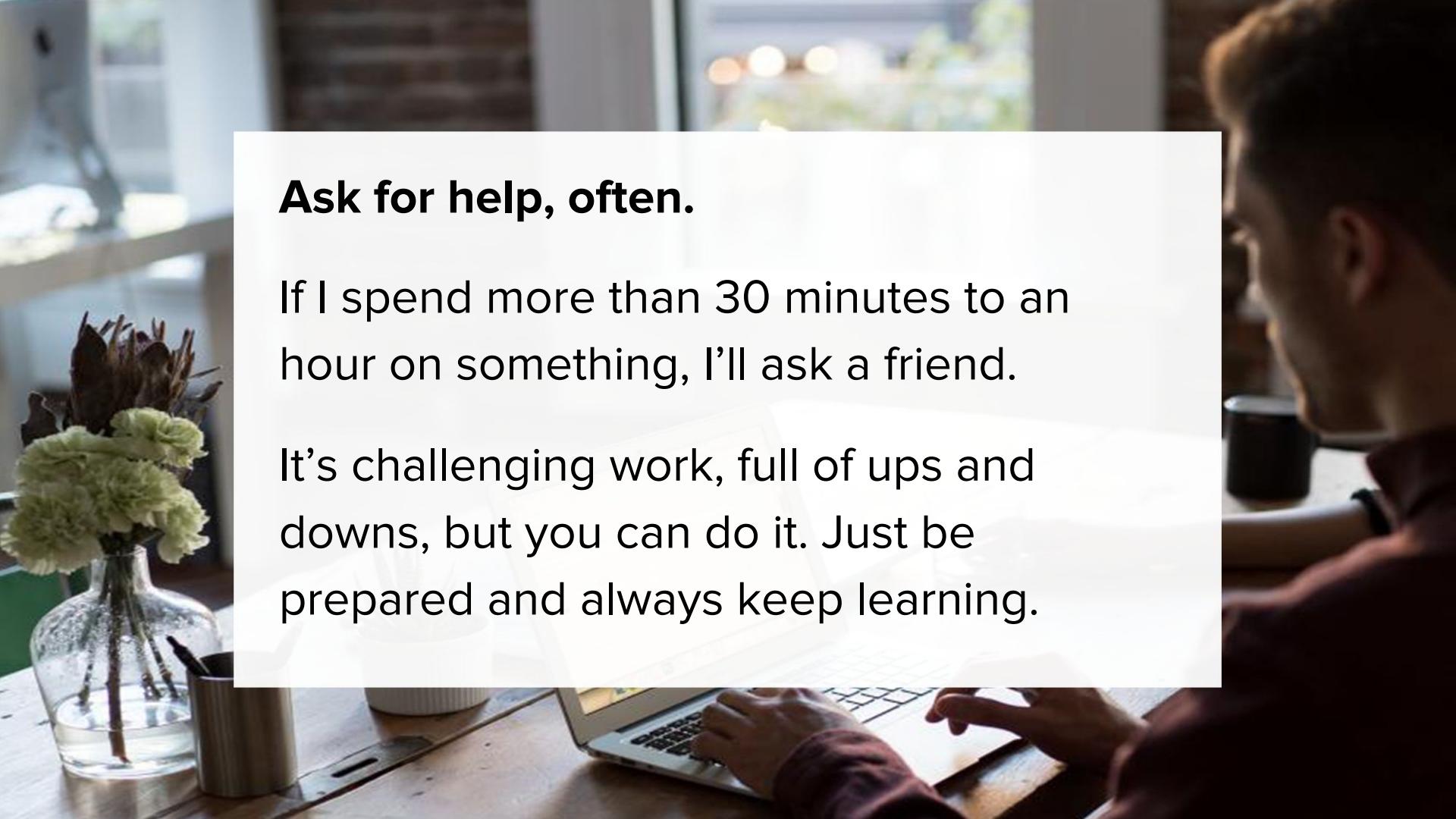
8. TOTAL REVAMP

For an extra cost, we will take your newly designed brand and continue it throughout your print material and social media design (business card, business letterhead/ note cards and envelopes, stamp, stickers, Facebook and Twitter page designs, etc.) to complete your seamless new look. In this, we are happy to include "launch day" photos. Your files are delivered in print ready pdf form.



A large white rectangular area is centered on the slide, containing the following text:

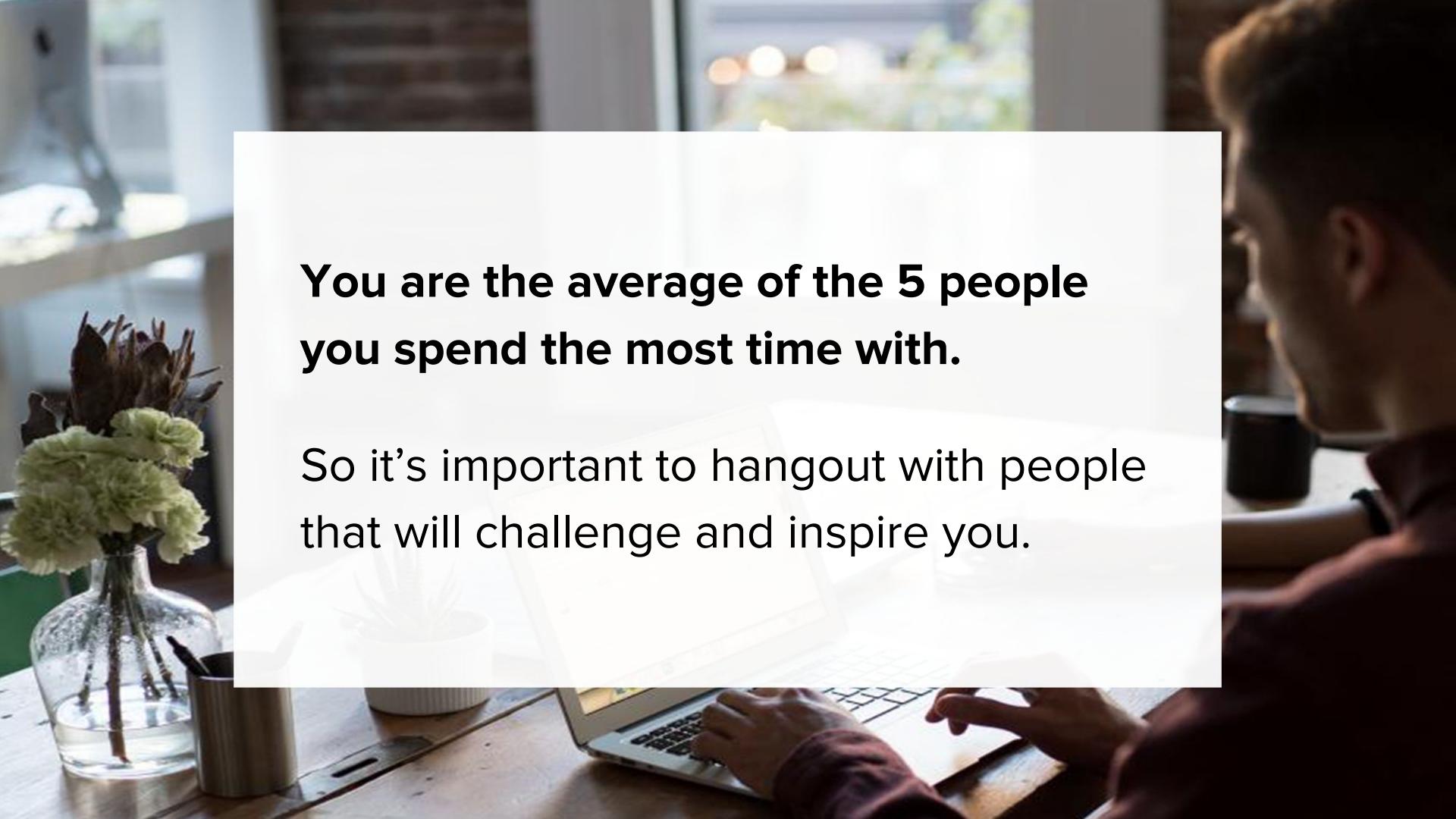
**Who has questions about the actual
technical work or process?**



Ask for help, often.

If I spend more than 30 minutes to an hour on something, I'll ask a friend.

It's challenging work, full of ups and downs, but you can do it. Just be prepared and always keep learning.

A photograph of a person's hands typing on a laptop keyboard. On the desk next to the laptop is a clear glass vase containing white hydrangea flowers and a small white pot with a green plant. To the right, a person's head and shoulders are visible, looking down at the laptop. A dark mug sits on the desk to the right of the laptop.

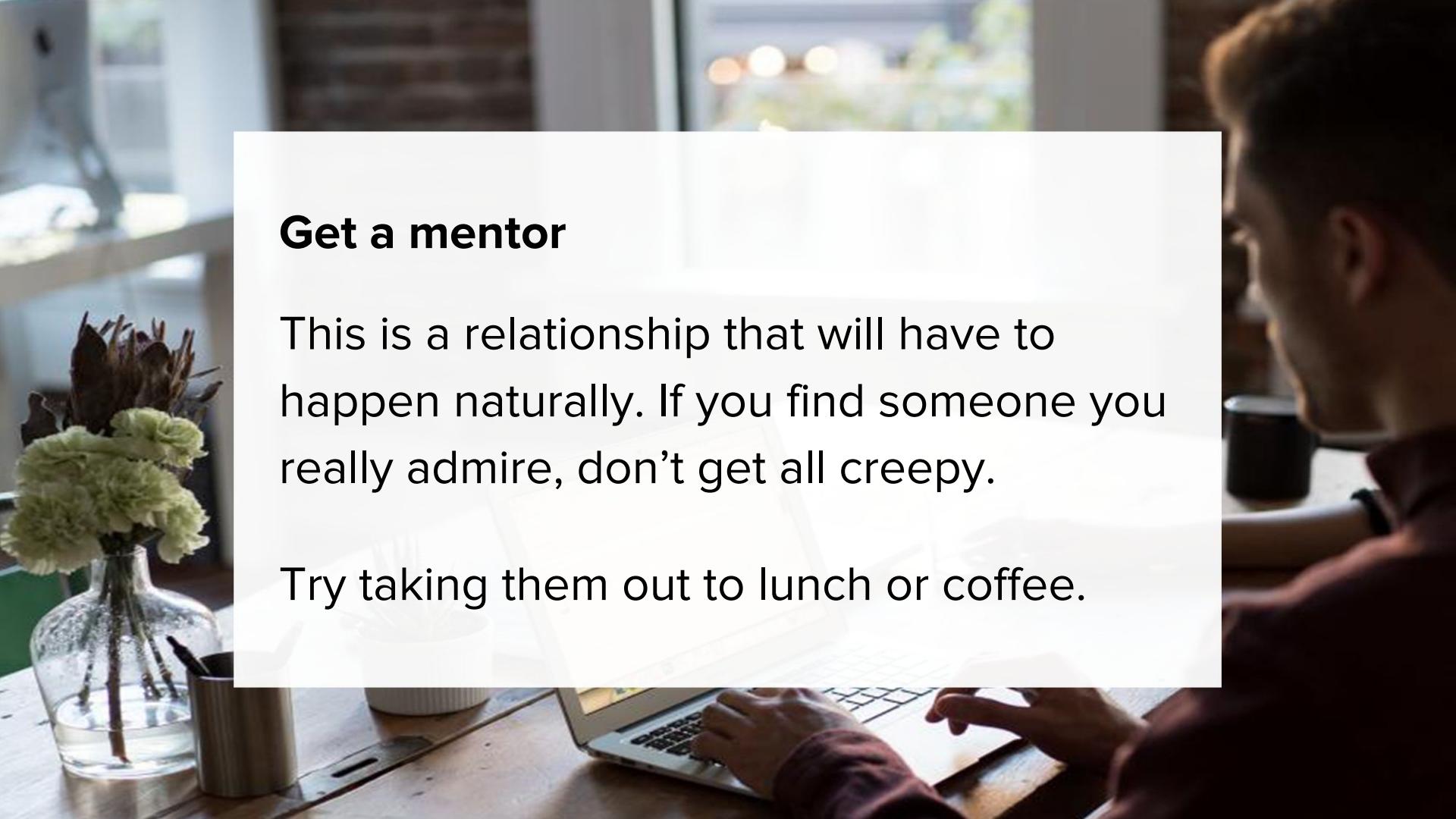
**You are the average of the 5 people
you spend the most time with.**

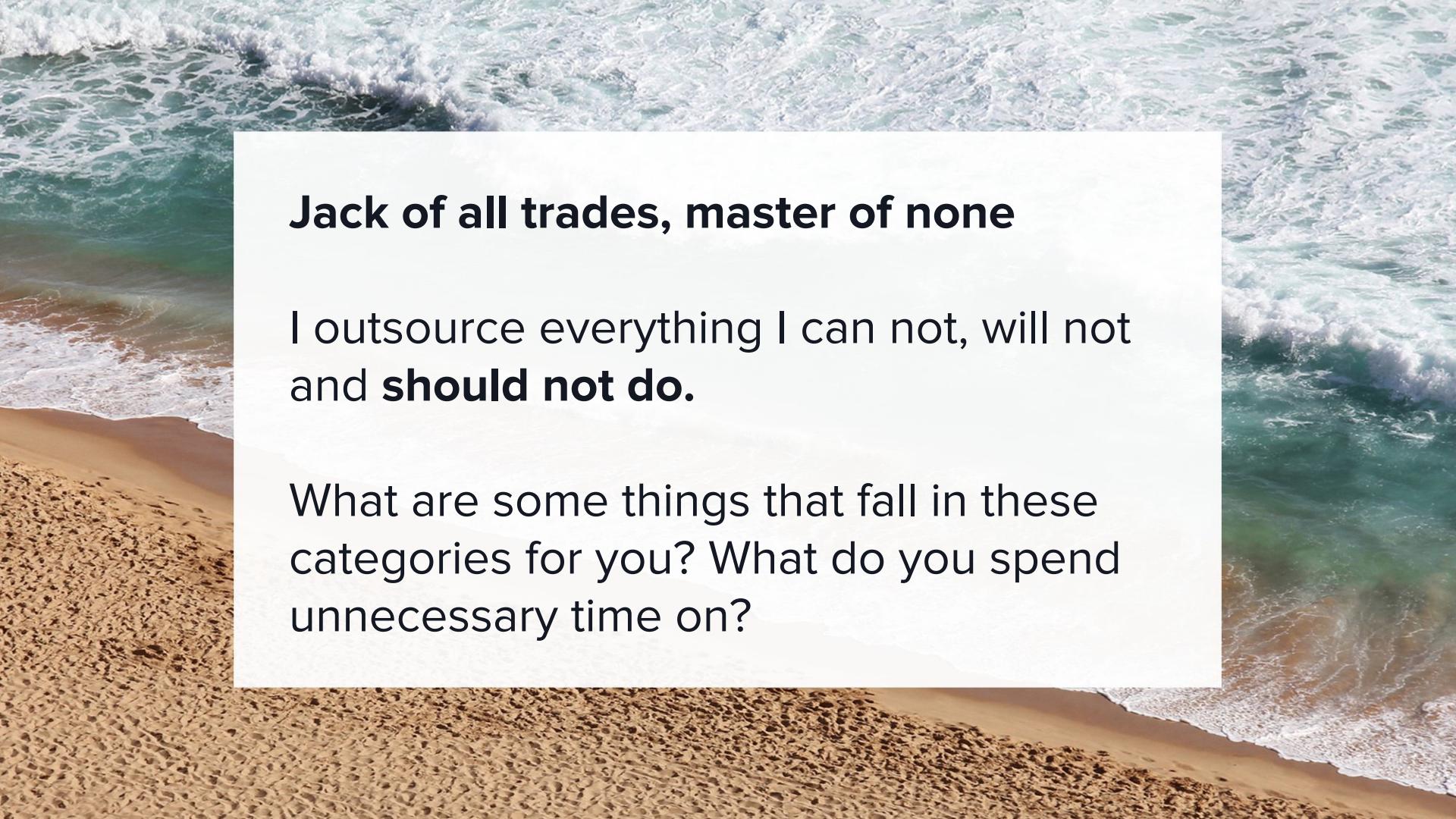
So it's important to hangout with people
that will challenge and inspire you.

Get a mentor

This is a relationship that will have to happen naturally. If you find someone you really admire, don't get all creepy.

Try taking them out to lunch or coffee.

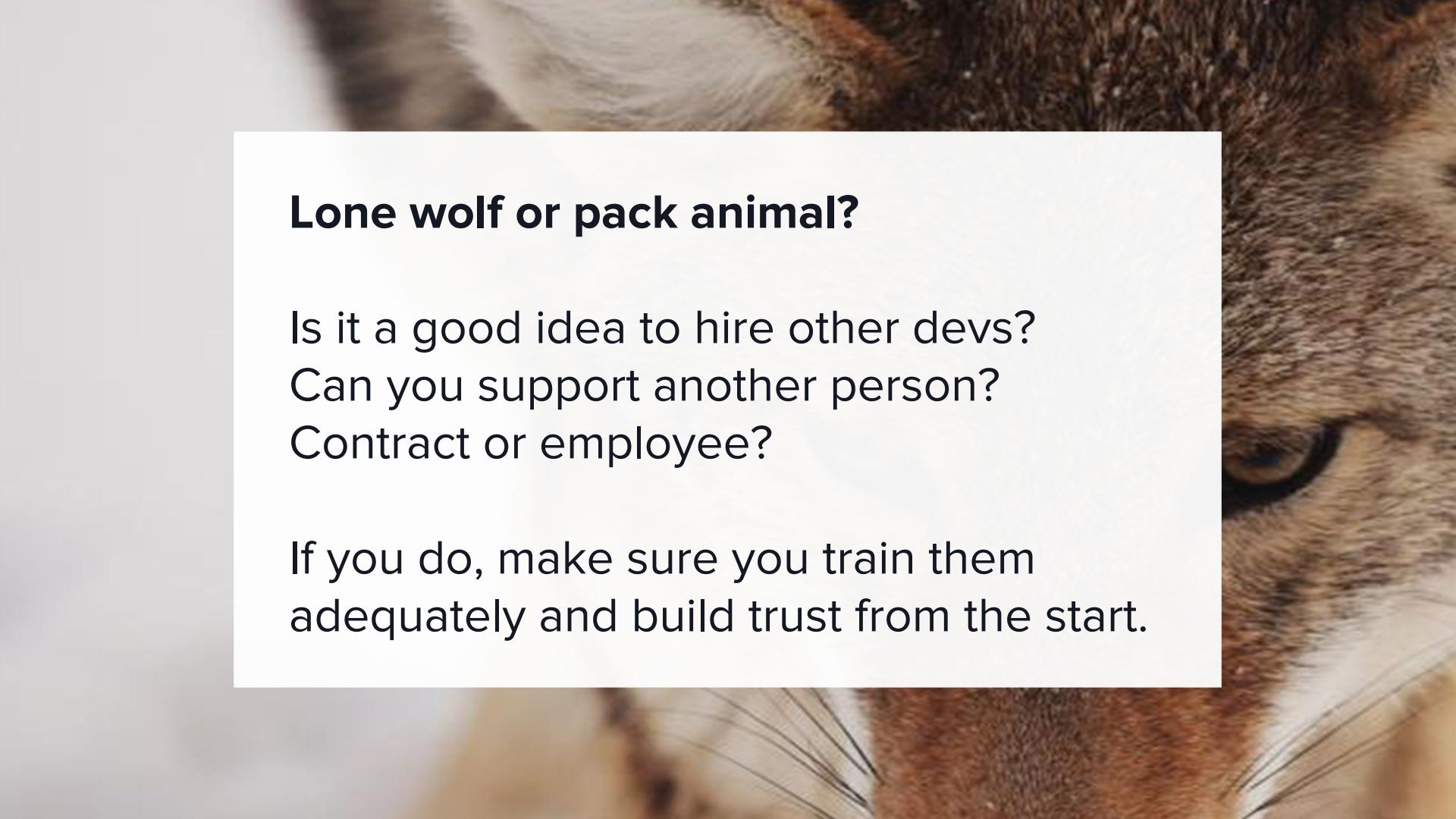




Jack of all trades, master of none

I outsource everything I can not, will not and **should not do.**

What are some things that fall in these categories for you? What do you spend unnecessary time on?

A close-up photograph of a wolf's face, focusing on its right eye and the surrounding brown and black fur. The eye is dark and expressive. The background is blurred.

Lone wolf or pack animal?

Is it a good idea to hire other devs?

Can you support another person?

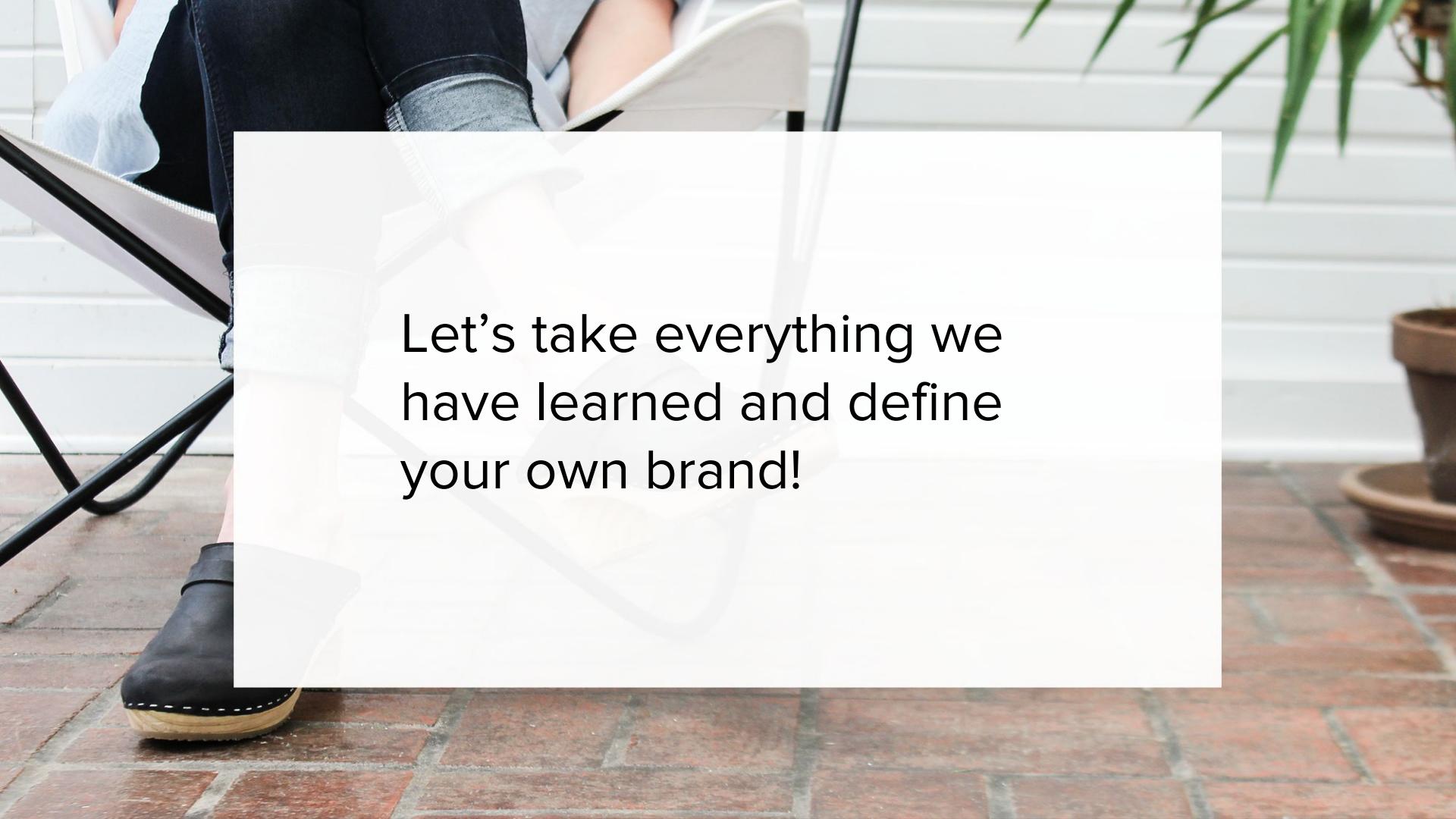
Contract or employee?

If you do, make sure you train them
adequately and build trust from the start.

WELL YOU HAVE LEARNED



YOUNG PADAWAN

A photograph of a person's lower body and feet. They are sitting in a white deck chair on a red brick patio. The person is wearing blue jeans and black leather clogs with white stitching. They are looking down at an open book held in their lap. The background shows a white building with horizontal siding and some green plants.

Let's take everything we
have learned and define
your own brand!

A photograph of two women from behind, standing on a bridge. They are both making peace signs with their right hands. The woman on the left has long, wavy hair and is wearing a grey sweater. The woman on the right has long, straight hair and is wearing a black top. In the background, the Golden Gate Bridge is visible through a hazy sky.

Heartworthy

Client Branding Guide

Tell us about you!

Basic info:

Company name, What word(s), letter(s) or icon(s) should be included in the logo?

What are your values and mission?

Service Description:

What is it that makes you different or unique from the competition?



A little more...

Target Audience:

Who are your customers? What motivates them? Why do they want your service?

Creative Considerations:

If you have special colours you already use or special fonts that I should use send it. It can be very useful to know your personal preferences too.

Most Important Point:

Most communications leave only one overall impression. Is there something specific the viewer should remember about the company after seeing the logo?

Branding



logos



Please visit
and read
the

The interface includes sections for:

- FONTS:** Droid Light, Gotham Condensed Book, Gil Sans.
- COLORS:** Various color swatches.
- LOGOS:** Logos for "MELISSA BIADOR PHOTOGRAPHY".
- PATTERNS, TEXTURES, WATERMARKS:** Patterns like chevrons and a portrait watermark.
- Text area:** {Salted Ink Digital Design Co.} SEP 10, 2013 – Brand Launch: Melissa Biador Photography → [saltedink.com/...](http://saltedink.com/)
- Pin description:** Pinned from saltedink.com
- Image:** A logo for "Norwood Ridge EVENT SPACE" featuring a tree and the text "adore your Norwood Ridge".

I | INSPIRATION BOARD

The inspiration board is a starting point and makes sure we are on the same page visually. We want any images you have collected, usually in a secret Pinterest board, and we will pull in colors, patterns, textures, and photos that visually represent the tone and theme of your new brand. *You will get 1 revision*

What we need from you:

- **Access to your secret Pinterest board**
- **Descriptions for each pin, explaining why the photo was included in the board**

2 | LOGO CONCEPTS

We want to get an idea of what message you want to give to the world with your site

What we need from you:

- **Mission statement**
- **Ideal customer**
- **Adjectives that describe the direction of the new brand..**



Laura Jack

Laura Jack

3 | BRAND STYLE GUIDE



ALTERNATE LOGOS



TYPOGRAPHY

Lato
abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz

Still Shine
abcdefghijklm
nopqrstuvwxyz

Here we add in alternate logos, signature patterns, color palette, specific font and type combinations, and any other imagery to complete the new brand. We then compile all of those elements into a brand style guide for you to reference in the future. *You will get 1 revision*



4 | WEBSITE DESIGN

Once the brand style board is complete and the designs are finalized, we get to work on the design of your new website. We start by mapping out the site to ensure that the layout is simple and intuitive, and then we add in all of the elements of the new brand. Blog and e-commerce design are also included. *You will get 2 revisions*

What we need from you:

- Idea of what you are looking for (website purpose, successful site outcomes, etc.)
- Will this be a one page website? If not, I need a list of all the pages we need.
- Text and photos for each page - or, you can add content and photos on as an extra service
- Admin access to your current site/ website account you may have set up
- Access to domain name (for example your GoDaddy account)



5 | LAUNCH DAY!

We believe something as significant as a new brand and website deserves to be celebrated! We showcase our client's new brand and website on our blog and social media and partner with you to generate excitement over your new launch! If you want a little more, we offer social media and marketing services. As a special thank you, you will get a custom "launch day" image to post to social media, if you choose.

What we need from you:

- **If you loved working with us, please write us a review on Yelp or our website!**

A close-up shot of Ron Swanson, a man with dark brown hair and a prominent mustache, wearing a maroon jacket over a white shirt. He is looking slightly downwards and to his left with a serious expression. The background shows a room with yellow patterned wallpaper and a dark doorway.

I regret nothing.
The end.

Resources

www.pinterest.com/christamclark/freelance

Skill Share (1st month free): <http://skl.sh/1kZmmkv>

I also recommend looking up screencasts/ recordings on YouTube, many people post great tutorials and this really helped me learn code, for free!